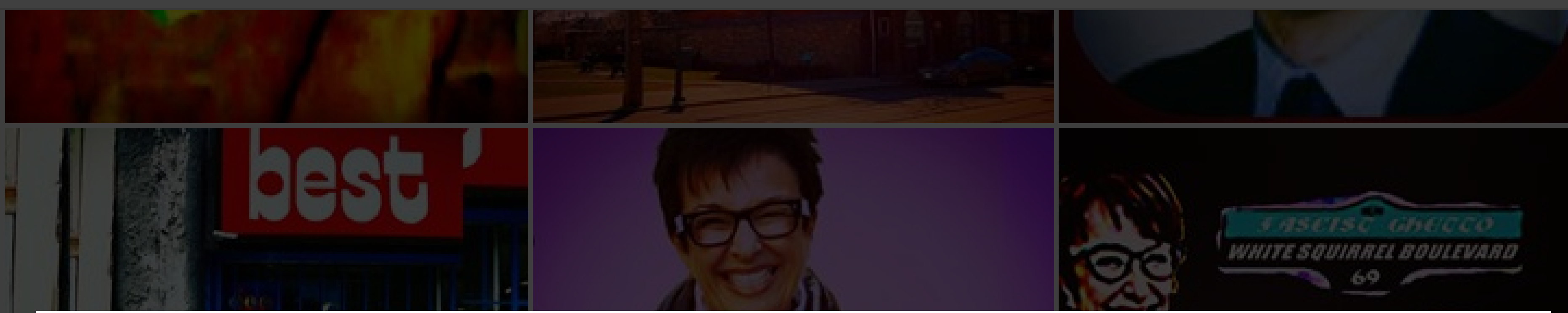
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well, and she was at a particular disadvantage as she did not even know precisely which letters. Nonetheless she made the interruption of the correspondence almost as strong an argument for release as the letters themselves. In a letter probably written in late October of 1917 Miss Adams threatened Dr. Forster that a court case "might make it a trifle serious for those detaining me" and considered him, as "manager," personally "dishonourable" for reading her letters, especially when "he is really only a physician after all, not a postmaster, as he evidently imagines himself." She obviously resented the denial of all her rights and the consequent assumption by medical authorities of every other kind of authority as well.

When Forster, speaking out of implicit moral authority, told her unilaterally that "men must be kept away," she attacked his diction for its blunt and to her rather vulgar implications of gender and sex. She insisted that her "friends" were "gentlemen." More balefully she observed that no one was allowed to call for her at the Asylum anyway. She was especially angry that Forster wrote to her sister about her correspondence, which she considered a great "impertinence." Then she turned the tables on the authorities, accusing them of humiliating her and her mother "all this summer on references to my opened letters by a stranger." They were the only "strangers" to read her letters. For people so concerned for her reputation, they had done the most to damage it themselves.

She wrote Dr. McClenahan again on October 27, 1917 to advise him of her lawyer's intention to "bring up my case in the courts immediately" if he did not receive her Certificate "right away." The lawyer himself "could see no flaw in my brain reasoning," and had another doctor examine her on the grounds. If she really had not been cured, as they insisted, "in ten years," the Asylum "cannot be any good" and she really ought to "try another." Miss Adams seemed to threaten suicide as she warned him that he might "goad a broken-hearted woman to desperation" if he detained her much longer. She lived "like a prison[er] behind iron bars[,] like a convict," when she loves "life and gaiety and society life and friends and will have them." The statement attests to considerable stubbornness and strength of will given that she had been in the Asylum for more than ten years, confined most of the time, as she wrote elsewhere, to a room six feet wide by ten feet long and without a light.

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